

Holsingerisms—No. 13

I regret very much the illness of brother J. P. Wolfe, of California. I sincerely hope and pray the Lord will bless the means used for his restoration; and I believe that in this prayer all our brethren and sisters can unite, for none have ever heard of him through the press except in terms of commendation, and so all should pray for his life, health and prosperity, that his usefulness may be prolonged. There is only one passage of scripture that is against Brother Wolfe, and that is a strong one: "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you." Luke 6:26. However, there is still hope for Brother Wolfe, for I did meet one man who, while he could not say anything evil of him, refused to speak well. I hope we may have weekly advice from California until he has fully recovered.

In my last reference was made to the conservation of Tunkerism in the Brethren church. Since that writing one of my correspondents refers to the same subject in very vigorous language. Here is part of one of his sentences: "I am convinced that every trace and color of Tunkerism will soon be bleached out of what is called the Brethren church. When that is fully accomplished I shall not care where I go, for outside of the Tunker church all orthodox churches are of equal standing with me." Now, what is this "Tunkerism," for the preservation of which our good brother is so much concerned, and to which I can say amen with all my heart? Let me tell you what it is, in a nutshell. It is simply taking God at his word. The Tunker idea consists in accepting the New Testament as it reads, as the complete and perfect, revealed and inspired plan of man's salvation. The gospel of Christ is to the Tunker the Word of God, "whereunto," Peter says: "ye do well that we take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts; knowing this that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." II Peter 1:19, 20.

That is the first principle of Tunkerism, and the second consists in implicitly obeying from the heart, all the requirements of that Word, without partiality or discrimination, as God may give opportunity and ability. Those two principles put together and applied will make the peculiar people known as Tunkers. They have "obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you. Being then made free from sin ye became the servants of righteousness." Romans 6:17, 18. Let us make a few applications for illustration:

Matthew 28:19, says; "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The highest intelligence of the world says, literally and faithfully carried out, this language will require three actions in baptism, and the Tunkers say, Amen, and so obey; hence our peculiar baptism, which orthodoxy acknowledges to be strictly correct, but too correctly strict.

Again, Jesus says: "If I then, your Lord

and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet." (John 13:14) and the simple Tunker says: "That is my creed and I'll obey my Master." But orthodoxy says: "Jesus did not mean what he said," and then proceed to say what *they* mean.

Again, our Master says: "Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool," and so on: please read all of it in Matt. 5:54-57. True to this command of Jesus the conscientious Tunker refuses to take any oath of any description, but simply answers yes or no as the truth requires, and the world accepts his word as of equal veracity with his who swears by the "Almighty Searcher of all Hearts,"

We will allow the above illustrations to suffice for the present, as demonstrating clearly what is now meant by the Tunker idea. We will only yet add this statement: That the same application must be made of all the commandments, injunctions and requirements of the New Testament.

The application of these principles requires nothing more than an intelligent understanding of the language in which the seeker of salvation will read his Bible. But he must search the Scriptures, as did the Bereans, "That they may receive the word with all readiness of mind." The success of our cause depends upon the reading and study of the word of God. "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." It is the "sincere milk of the Word," which makes babes in Christ grow in grace and the knowledge of the truth." But there must be a desire for it on the part of the child or the food will not assimilate. And herein may be found the great danger of this age: The people have lost their appetite for the pure, simple, unadulterated word of God. They can scarcely be persuaded to listen to a plain gospel sermon, or to read a strong gospel essay. They want something with plenty of worldly condiment, seasoned to their perverted tastes. Aye, here it is. There is too little reading of the Word itself. It is simply astonishing how woefully ignorant the American people are of the contents of the New Testament. They have a fair acquaintance with the passages used in the International Sunday-school lessons, and such as are quoted in their several sectarian creeds and catechisms, and can quote such parts as they have been taught are proof texts for what *they believe*, but when asked what the *gospel teaches*, they don't know.

Now, then, in conclusion for this time, at least, let me suggest a remedy, for there is no use to tear a wound open and then leaving it undressed. Let us have more gospel reading and teaching in our homes, in the Sunday-schools, in public preaching, and in our EVANGELIST. And let us all, as parents and teachers and ministers, endeavor to cultivate in ourselves and in our children and scholars and hearers, a *hungering* for the word of God. From my observation during the last two years I have come to the con-

clusion that not one-tenth of the young members of the church read the EVANGELIST; hence, unless some of the older members of the family invite their attention to this article, my effort to instruct them will be lost, so far as they are concerned.

Last EVANGELIST brought me the sad news of the departure of an old friend, in the death of sister Amie Fahrney Cost, of Maryland. Keep up courage, brother Andrew, 'twill not be long until we will all "Be over on the other shore." I also learn through the *Gospel Messenger*, of the sad and sudden death of my friend and kinsman, Jacob Deardorff, of Dr. Fahrney's office, Chicago.

"Men drop so fast, 'ere life's mid-stage we tread,
Few know so many friends alive, as dead."

—Young.

Berlin, Feb. 19.

H. R. H.

Chaparral, Cal.

In the February number we see accounts of the good work which is going on in different parts of California. We will add one more name to the list of different points where the work is still going on, and we are pleased to let you know the Chaparral church is still alive; altho only a few of us in number we have been wonderfully blessed. The Chaparral church was reorganized March 15, 1897, with ten members. Now it has increased to twelve. We have from our small number selected two earnest ministers. The brethren here have preaching every second Sunday in the Methodist church which is in our vicinity. In our neighborhood are some four, or five different denominations; we all join in and work in harmony together and try to help each other.

We also have an Epworth League which is doing a great work in educating the young people and helping the older ones to press on as with some, time is very short, and others must be ready to take their places. The League has adopted the Christian Endeavor prayer meeting cards with which they are well pleased. We as a church have chosen the first Sunday in each month for a social meeting, the time to be spent in studying the Bible, and having song and prayer. At our last business meeting our main object was to help the mission cause, after reading the BRETHREN EVANGELIST and hearing a few letters received from the secretary, Brother Garman, we decided he was the missionary whom we were directed to help. We are going to send Sunday-school papers, cards and literature which he can make use of in his distant school in far off Florida. We will also send what money we can spare to be used in any way he sees best.

I take the BRETHREN EVANGELIST and enjoy reading it very much, I am always anxious to read the pieces especially on temperance, as I write to our Co. paper semi monthly and they are a great deal of help to me. Another great help is the Sunday-school lesson which I am very anxious to get to study my lesson. Do not forget Brother Garman in your mission work.

ETTA CREWDSON, Sec.